

1 NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
2 VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH  
3 QC

4 SKS3(SS) WILLIAM E. FEDDELER, JR.

5  
6 CONDUCTED AT COMMANDER, SUBMARINE SQUADRON 1 CONFERENCE ROOM,  
7 822 CLARK STREET, BUILDING 661, PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII  
8

9 ON 14 FEBRUARY 2001  
10

11 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Good afternoon, my name is Tom Roth-Roffy and  
12 I'm with the National Transportation Safety Board and we are--we  
13 are here conducting an investigation into the accident that  
14 occurred between the GREENEVILLE and the motor vessel Ehime  
15 Maru. Just for your information the National Transportation  
16 Safety Board is an independent agency for the federal government  
17 and we are charged with investigating transportation accidents  
18 in the U.S. The Office of Marine Safety is responsible for  
19 investigating major marine accidents, okay, and we are from the  
20 Office of Marine Safety. I would also like you to know that the  
21 purpose of this investigation is to determine the cause of the  
22 accident and then to make recommendations--they're called safety  
23 recommendations--aimed at preventing the reoccurrence of the  
24 accident or a similar accident. This is not a legal  
25 investigation. It is not our intention to determine fault of  
26 any individual or agency. Our interests are strictly safety and  
27 not legal. So, I just want you to understand that.  
28

29 WIT: Yes, sir.  
30

31 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: If you desire, you may have another person  
32 assist you with this interview. Would you like to have somebody  
33 assist you?  
34

35 WIT: No, sir.  
36

37 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: You can make it through by yourself?  
38

39 WIT: Yes, sir.  
40

41 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Also joining me at the interview are  
42 representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Navy. I  
43 would like to, at this time, ask them to introduce themselves.  
44

45 LT JOHNSON: I'm LT Johnson with the U.S. Coast Guard.  
46

47 LTJG KUSANO: LTJG Ken Kusano, U.S. Coast Guard.

1  
2 LCDR SANTOMAURO: LCDR Santomauro, I'm the SUBPAC electronics  
3 material officer.  
4  
5 CDR CACCIVIO: We've met, I'm CDR Caccivio from SUBPAC also.  
6  
7 MR. WOODY: And I'm Bill Woody from NTSB.  
8  
9 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Okay, the main reason we've asked you to come  
10 here Petty Officer Feddeler, and for the record, please state  
11 your name.  
12  
13 WIT: Petty Officer Feddeler.  
14  
15 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Feddeler? Could you spell that please, for  
16 the record.  
17  
18 WIT: F-E-D-D-E-L-E-R.  
19  
20 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Thank you.  
21  
22 WIT: Yes, sir.  
23  
24 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: What I would like you to do is in your own  
25 words describe your--what you did, what you saw, your  
26 activities, say from the time the vessel was--had completed  
27 their search of the surface at periscope depth and when the  
28 Captain or whoever order emergency deep; if you could recount  
29 for us what you remember from--from what happened. What you saw  
30 and what you heard.  
31  
32 WIT: Yes, sir. The Officer of the Deck ordered emergency deep  
33 so I followed through with the initial procedures and running up  
34 ahead flank I had full cavity, full dive on both planes, went  
35 down and we were ordered straight to 400 feet from periscope  
36 depth, about six zero feet. And once we got there--once we got  
37 to 400 feet, he ordered me to change course, left 15-degree  
38 rudder to course north. About halfway through the course the  
39 Officer of the Deck ordered me to continue to course three four  
40 zero. About--we were passing course zero three zero to the left  
41 when the Captain asked me to stand up and allow the visitor to  
42 take the seat for the emergency blow. So we were still turning  
43 at the time, but I kept my hand on the stick, on the--on the  
44 helm and maintained the 15-degree rudder and the gentleman sat  
45 down, and he got his seatbelt on and he grabbed the rudder. And  
46 I explained to him the rudder indication and the bow planes  
47 indications and what he needed to do to follow out with the

1 officer of the decks procedures and that I was right there with  
2 him and if there was any hesitation that I was going to grab the  
3 stick, or the diving officer would grab the stick and help him  
4 out. And um--after he sat down and I explained all that we were  
5 about course north and the officer of the deck ordered emergency  
6 blow. And as soon as he ordered emergency blow we came to  
7 rudder amidships and ahh--the diving officer ordered the stern  
8 planes and mine to maintain 20-degree up angle. So I helped get  
9 the initial up angle on and level the bow planes and the stern  
10 planes then maintained the 20-degree up angle. We got on the  
11 surface, we heard the water rush around the hull as the bow came  
12 back down and then we heard a thud--a loud thud. And everyone  
13 looked around at each other puzzled because we absolutely  
14 weren't expecting it and I asked John if he could get up and I  
15 could take over. He said no problem. He jumped up and I jumped  
16 back in the seat. And umm--we then--the officer of the deck  
17 started ordering backing bells and left and right full rudder to  
18 come back and help recover. About that time the Captain jumped  
19 on the periscope and was making rounds. And he was ordering the  
20 officer of the deck to hurry up, turn around. I was okay until  
21 the Captain came down there and he started to panic a little so  
22 I didn't feel as good myself. But we turned around, we lowered  
23 the outboard to help with maneuvering and they tried--they  
24 opened--they opened the lower access hatch to the bridge and  
25 tried to communicate with the survivors to see if anybody was  
26 hurt and how many there was supposed to be total. And they went  
27 on the 1-MC trying to find out if anyone spoke Japanese because  
28 they couldn't communicate with them, obviously.

29  
30 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: I'm sorry, you are speaking kind of softly.

31  
32 LT JOHNSON: I'm sorry, I couldn't hear you but I don't want to  
33 start the questions could I ask him one quick thing?

34  
35 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: As long we're satisfied that the narrative has  
36 come along far enough.

37  
38 LT JOHNSON: Okay.

39  
40 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Then we can now go ahead and zero in on some  
41 more detailed questions that--

42  
43 WIT: Yes, sir.

44  
45 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: After they passed the word about asking for  
46 anybody that spoke Japanese was there anybody on board that  
47 spoke Japanese that came up to communicate with the survivors?

1  
2 WIT: No, sir. One of the guys on board came up and asked for a  
3 cell phone because he knew someone that could speak Japanese and  
4 we were hoping he could pass the phone back and forth to  
5 translate, sir. I don't know--I'm not sure if that was ever  
6 carried out.  
7  
8 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Alright. I'm going to pass you to Mr. Bill  
9 Woody or----  
10  
11 LT JOHNSON: I only had one question. You said you felt okay--  
12 I'm sorry this is LT Johnson. You said after you got on the  
13 surface and you resumed watch you felt okay. As I said I  
14 couldn't hear you good.  
15  
16 WIT: Yes, sir. I was okay umm as far as mentally and I wasn't  
17 nervous at all until the Captain was on the scope. He started  
18 panicking and I knew something was really, really wrong and I  
19 didn't know exactly what was going on, but I knew what he seen  
20 through the scope was really bad.  
21  
22 LT JOHNSON: When you said the Captain was panicking, what are  
23 you talking about. What is your--why did you have that opinion?  
24  
25 WIT: Umm--he was--umm--he started screaming at the Officer of  
26 the Deck telling him to hurry up and turn the ship around and  
27 tell him to drive the boat and umm--he was continuously saying,  
28 "Oh, no. Oh, no", in a panicky state. And so I felt really  
29 uneasy at the point because I didn't know what was going on and  
30 no one told me what was going on. I just knew that we had  
31 collided and obviously what he could see was really bad.  
32  
33 LT JOHNSON: That's all I have.  
34  
35 LCDR SANTOMAURO: I don't have any questions.  
36  
37 MR. WOODY: I don't know if I heard you correctly, but I think  
38 you said lowered the outboard, what----?  
39  
40 WIT: ----Yes, sir.  
41  
42 MR. WOODY: What does that mean?  
43  
44 WIT: The outboard motor is a--umm--secondary propulsion motor  
45 that is lowered from the aft end of the ship and we use it on  
46 the maneuvering watch. It allows us to pull up against a pier -  
47 ---

1  
2 MR. WOODY: ----I see----.  
3  
4 WIT: ---- without any collisions or without colliding into the  
5 pier.  
6  
7 MR. WOODY: Okay if I may just be sure here. You were coming to  
8 course zero, zero, zero, coming to course north?  
9  
10 WIT: Yes, sir.  
11  
12 MR. WOODY: And then you proceeded course to come further left--  
13 continue left to three four zero?  
14  
15 WIT: Yes, sir.  
16  
17 MR. WOODY: And the ship is still swinging when the visitor came  
18 to take up your seat.  
19  
20 WIT: Yes, sir. The ship was still turning.  
21  
22 MR. WOODY: Right, did the Captain come with him or did you--how  
23 were you aware the Captain wanted him to sit there?  
24  
25 WIT: Pardon?  
26  
27 MR. WOODY: Did the Captain come over with him?  
28  
29 WIT: No, sir. The Captain was on the con and he asked me, he  
30 said, "Petty Officer Feddeler would you please stand out so Mr.  
31 So and So can take the helm for the emergency blow?" I said,  
32 "Yes, sir" and I stood up and let him set down.  
33  
34 MR. WOODY: Okay, now when the ship heading--what was the  
35 ship's heading about this time?  
36  
37 WIT: When I stood up?  
38  
39 MR. WOODY: Yes, when you stood up.  
40  
41 WIT: We were passing zero three zero to the left sir.  
42  
43 MR. WOODY: Right, and did you keep your hand on the--on the  
44 wheel or did you---  
45  
46 WIT: ----Yes, sir.  
47

1 MR. WOODY: You did. And there was--did there come a time when  
2 the visitor took the wheel and you--your hands were off the  
3 wheel?  
4  
5 WIT: Yes, sir.  
6  
7 MR. WOODY: There was, okay. And about what was the heading at  
8 that time? The heading is kind of----  
9  
10 WIT: ----Right----  
11  
12 MR. WOODY: ----the one thing we are trying to find out is what  
13 the heading was.  
14  
15 WIT: It was soon after he sat down. So once he sat down I took  
16 my hand off. Once he put his hand on I took my hand off.  
17  
18 MR. WOODY: How soon after he sat down was the emergency blow  
19 initiated?  
20  
21 WIT: Umm--It was a minute or so. It wasn't very long at all.  
22  
23 MR. WOODY: It could have been a minute. So then your ship  
24 could still be swinging to the left?  
25  
26 WIT: Yes, sir.  
27  
28 MR. WOODY: Was the left rudder on at that time?  
29  
30 WIT: No, sir. When he ordered emergency blow----  
31 MR. WOODY: ----before emergency blow was it still left rudder?  
32 WIT: Yes, sir.  
33 MR. WOODY: So when the visitor sat down there was left rudder?  
34 WIT: Yes, sir.  
35 MR. WOODY: And left rudder is still there and it is--I presume--  
36 ---  
37  
38 WIT: ----maintain left rudder, yes, he ordered rudder.  
39  
40 MR. WOODY: So, what was the last heading you could remember  
41 before the emergency blow or at emergency blow, either one.  
42  
43 WIT: Ahh, course north, sir.  
44  
45 MR. WOODY: Course north.  
46  
47 CAPT KYLE: Want some water?

1  
2  
3 WIT: No, I'm okay. Thank you, sir.  
4  
5 MR. WOODY: Now, was there anybody waiting for the course to  
6 become north before they issued the emergency blow order--you  
7 heard any kind of plans or thoughts that you could have thought  
8 being in association with the course with the issue of the order  
9 to emergency surface?  
10  
11 WIT: No, sir.  
12  
13 MR. WOODY: Not as far as you know?  
14  
15 WIT: No, sir.  
16  
17 MR. WOODY: Now, have you been involved in any emergency surface  
18 before when you had the helm?  
19  
20 WIT: Yes, sir. Ummm, very many. I'm probably the most  
21 experienced on board.  
22  
23 MR. WOODY: Did any of these ever involve at--come at a time  
24 when the vessel was--had rudder on and was changing heading?  
25  
26 WIT: I don't remember, sir.  
27  
28 MR. WOODY: Okay.  
29  
30 WIT: It is possible though.  
31  
32 MR. WOODY: Once the emergency air was released, did the heading  
33 of the vessel change--would you have known about it?  
34  
35 WIT: It does. It will swing back and forth as you go up.  
36  
37 MR. WOODY: About how much?  
38  
39 WIT: Probably four or five degrees off of north.  
40  
41 MR. WOODY: Five degrees off north?  
42  
43 WIT: Right.  
44  
45 MR. WOODY: Before the first bump, do you recall what the  
46 heading might have been?  
47

1 WIT: No, sir.  
2  
3 MR. WOODY: I think this is my first set of questions with this.  
4 We can--anyone else have questions that are related to this part  
5 of the evolution?  
6  
7 LCDR SANTOMAURO: I think we got--I've got everything I need as  
8 far as trying to get a good picture of him--being a battle  
9 station helmsman in the past myself so I think we got all we  
10 need--I need.  
11  
12 CAPT KYLE: I'm comfortable. I think based on the sketch we had  
13 prior to coming in I think we've answered the questions we had.  
14  
15 CDR CACCIVIO: I'm fine.  
16  
17 MR. WOODY: I think we've wound up those. We need you--now  
18 we've heard other people say that there was a small course in  
19 heading changes that the visitors executed on the boat sometime  
20 during the noon hour. Were you around at that time?  
21  
22 WIT: No, sir. I was not driving.  
23  
24 MR. WOODY: You were not involved?  
25  
26 WIT: No, sir.  
27  
28 MR. WOODY: When did you come on watch?  
29  
30 WIT: It was probably about 1330 for angles and dangles and once  
31 we were finished with angles and dangles it was around 1400.  
32  
33 MR. WOODY: Now the angles and dangles, they would involve what  
34 kind of angles and----  
35  
36 WIT: Ahh, 20 degree up angles and down angles.  
37  
38 MR. WOODY: Okay, when you came at that time was there any  
39 visitor in the helmsman chair at that time?  
40  
41 WIT: No, sir.  
42  
43 MR. WOODY: There was not? Who did you relieve?  
44  
45 WIT: Petty Officer Darby. FT3 Darby.  
46  
47 MR. WOODY: D-A-R-B-Y?



1  
2 WIT: Yes, sir.  
3  
4 MR. WOODY: And you've given me his rate, but I frankly didn't  
5 get it.  
6  
7 WIT: FT3.  
8  
9 MR. WOODY: FT3.  
10  
11 WIT: Yes, sir.  
12  
13 MR. WOODY: When you relieved the watch do you recall what  
14 changes--what evolved after that?  
15  
16 WIT: They were on steady course when I relieved and they called  
17 me up there for the angles and dangles. So, I don't recall what  
18 the course was. I just knew that we were changing depth.  
19  
20 MR. WOODY: And after when they were through with the angles and  
21 dangles stopped, do you recall what it was?  
22  
23 WIT: It--after the angles and dangles stopped then we went to  
24 periscope depth.  
25  
26 MR. WOODY: Were you the helmsman when the ship went to  
27 periscope depth?  
28  
29 WIT: Yes, sir.  
30  
31 MR. WOODY: And who was the person on the other planes?  
32  
33 WIT: Petty Officer Ramirez.  
34  
35 MR. WOODY: Ramirez.  
36  
37 WIT: YN3 or YNSN.  
38  
39 MR. WOODY: Were you--were you at the helm the whole time the  
40 vessel was at periscope depth?  
41  
42 WIT: Yes, sir.  
43  
44 MR. WOODY: What was the next evolution--major evolution that  
45 was executed after the ship was at periscope depth.  
46

1 WIT: Periscope depth we came to six zero feet. We were on  
2 course one-two-zero. The Officer of the Deck was making rounds  
3 with the periscope. He asked us to come up to five eight feet.  
4 Normally we are able to come straight up to five eight feet we  
5 were pretty good at periscope depth, and for some reason we had  
6 trouble coming up to five eight feet so it did take a couple of  
7 minutes. Once we got up there, we actually passed five eight  
8 feet and went to about five seven or five six so we came a  
9 little shallow and a couple minutes after the dive announced  
10 five eight feet to the officer of the deck he ordered emergency  
11 deep.

12  
13 MR. WOODY: Was it the Officer of the Deck that ordered  
14 emergency deep or----

15  
16 WIT: ----Yes sir.

17  
18 MR. WOODY: Does Captain and the OOD have different voices--  
19 could you mistake one for the other?

20  
21 WIT: Very different, sir. Yes, sir.

22  
23 MR. WOODY: Totally different? And your recollection is was the  
24 OOD that ordered the emergency deep?

25  
26 WIT: Yes, sir. There's also the shallow water depth gauge  
27 which is right above me and it's at an angle where I can see  
28 everybody in the back at control--kind of like a rear view  
29 mirror, so I know who is giving the orders and if the officer of  
30 the deck gives me an order and I go to acknowledge him, I can  
31 see whether he is talking on the phone to the captain or if he's  
32 talking to someone at the time and I can wait until he is done  
33 to acknowledge him so I don't interrupt him. So things are  
34 pretty smooth.

35  
36 MR. WOODY: And the emergency deep, what depth did you go to for  
37 that?

38  
39 WIT: When he ordered emergency deep?

40  
41 MR. WOODY: Yes.

42  
43 WIT: What depth were we ordered to?

44  
45 MR. WOODY: Yes.

46  
47 WIT: Directly to 400 feet, sir.

1  
2 MR. WOODY: Directly to 400 feet?  
3  
4 WIT: Yes, sir.  
5  
6 MR. WOODY: Was there any intermediate depth that you stopped at  
7 before reaching 400 feet?  
8  
9 WIT: No, sir. Its 60 to 400, sir.  
10  
11 MR. WOODY: How long were you at 400 feet?  
12  
13 WIT: We were there for a couple of minutes. Long enough for us  
14 to come from one two zero to course north, sir.  
15  
16 MR. WOODY: When you have emergency deep, do you sometimes come  
17 to 150 feet?  
18  
19 WIT: Yes, sir. That is usually the depth that we come to, so  
20 this was different in this case. We normally come to one five  
21 zero.  
22  
23 MR. WOODY: Okay, that is all I have of this witness at this  
24 time.  
25  
26 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: I'm sorry. Could you--you mentioned regarding  
27 the course that when you didn't--at periscope depth--do you  
28 remember the course that you were steering?  
29  
30 WIT: One two zero, sir.  
31  
32 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: One-two-zero and did your--your emergency  
33 decent at one two zero?  
34  
35 WIT: Yes, sir.  
36  
37 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Okay, and then there was a course change to----  
38  
39 WIT: ----North, sir. Left to north.  
40  
41 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Left to north. Now was there an  
42 intermediate course ordered like three two zero or something?  
43  
44 WIT: He ordered course north first and then he asked me to  
45 continue to three four zero.  
46  
47 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: I understand.

1  
2 MR. WOODY: At the time you were 400 feet was the time which  
3 would require the boat to come from one two zero to north?  
4  
5 WIT: Yes, sir.  
6  
7 MR. WOODY: The time to swing around?  
8  
9 WIT: Yes, sir.  
10  
11 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: That's all the questions I have.  
12  
13 LCDR SANTOMAURO: During the MBT blow your rudder is amidships,  
14 is that correct?  
15  
16 WIT: Yes, sir.  
17  
18 LCDR SANTOMAURO: And you really have no affect on the ship--  
19 once they do that blow----  
20  
21 WIT: That's correct, sir.  
22  
23 LCDR SANTOMAURO: You're not going to actually take control of  
24 the ship again until it's up on the surface?  
25  
26 WIT: Yes, sir. Right.  
27  
28 LCDR SANTOMAURO: Okay. And during that whole evolution, the  
29 person that is sitting in the chair, you still had--you actually  
30 had physical control of the rudder and the bow planes?  
31  
32 WIT: Yes, sir.  
33  
34 LCDR SANTOMAURO: Okay. That's it.  
35  
36 CAPT KYLE: Its CAPT KYLE, SUBPAC. I apologize if I'm covering  
37 old ground, I just wanted to ask you a question because I wasn't  
38 here most of the time. When did--I think I overheard you say  
39 that there was a, I presume [cell phone rings] there was a guest  
40 sitting in the--at the helm during the blow. When in the course  
41 change did he sit down?  
42  
43 WIT: We were passing zero three zero to the left, sir.  
44  
45 CAPT KYLE: Zero three zero to left in route to three four zero?  
46  
47 WIT: Yes, sir.

1  
2 CAPT KYLE: So, did the blow occur on three four zero or course  
3 north?  
4  
5 WIT: Course north, sir. He intended to come to three four  
6 zero, but he called the blow before we reached ordered course  
7 and I brought the rudder amidships at that time.  
8  
9 CAPT KYLE: So one more time. When did the guest sit down?  
10  
11 WIT: When passing course zero three zero to the left, sir.  
12  
13 CAPT KYLE: Oh, zero three zero to the left?  
14  
15 WIT: Yes, sir.  
16  
17 CAPT KYLE: I got it. Okay, so you finished the course change  
18 while he was sitting in the seat, basically you helped him to do  
19 that?  
20  
21 WIT: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.  
22  
23 CAPT KYLE: Then when the--once the blow was ordered you just  
24 put rudder amidships?  
25  
26 WIT: Yes, sir. We never--we never got to finish the course  
27 change obviously.  
28  
29 CAPT KYLE: You were swinging and then the emergency blow was  
30 ordered and you just went rudder amidships at that point?  
31  
32 WIT: Yes, sir.  
33  
34 CAPT KYLE: So the head was still swinging left after you  
35 brought the rudder amidships, hopefully?  
36  
37 WIT: Yes, sir.  
38  
39 CAPT KYLE: What were the actions you took when the emergency  
40 blow was--what actions were taken at the station when emergency  
41 blow was activated--I heard you say rudder amidships. How about  
42 the planes, were they---  
43  
44 WIT: ----the dive ordered full rise in both planes to get the  
45 initial up angle and once he saw the ship starting to come up  
46 and they did the blow simultaneously I locked my bow planes and  
47 he asked the stern planesman to maintain a two zero re-up angle.

1  
2 CAPT KYLE: Say again what they said with the bow planes.  
3  
4 WIT: He asked me to put a full rise in the bow planes to help  
5 get the bubble up.  
6  
7 CAPT KYLE: And then what? Give him full rise all the way up?  
8  
9 WIT: No, sir. Once we saw the angle was coming up, I zeroed my  
10 bow planes and the rudder.  
11  
12 CAPT KYLE: Oh, zeroed the bow planes, got it.  
13  
14 WIT: Yes, sir.  
15  
16 CAPT KYLE: Thank you very much. Anybody else?  
17  
18 MR. ROTH-ROFFY: Thank you very much. That concludes our  
19 interview with Petty Officer Feddeler.